



NATIONAL SMALL BUSINESS TREE PLANTING PROGRAM

The National Small Business Tree Planting Program was authorized for several years in the 1990s and was administered by the Small Business Administration (SBA). The SBA provided grants to state forestry agencies to contract with local nurseries, arborists and landscapers to plant trees along neighborhood streets, courthouse squares, city parks, and school playgrounds. The program leveraged federal dollars with non-federal sources to improve the urban and community tree resources of many of the nation's towns and cities. ***More than 18,000 small landscaping businesses with fewer than 100 employees were employed to plant over 23 million trees across the country as a result of the program.*** These trees have encouraged consumers to spend more time and money in retail and business locations, decreased heating and cooling costs and improved the overall livability of communities.

SMALL BUSINESS ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP ASSISTANCE ACT

NASF actively works to promote community tree planting, public-private partnerships, and volunteer tree planting efforts that help stimulate local economies, create jobs, and mobilize community spirit. As the primary cooperator in delivering the previous SBA tree planting program, ***State Foresters strongly recommend that Congress pass the Small Business Environmental Stewardship Assistance Act (HR 4509).*** HR 4509 reauthorizes the SBA program at \$50MM for each of FY2011 to FY2015 and will provide green-collar jobs and support increases in urban tree canopy that:

- Reduce energy demand,
- Clean the air of harmful pollutants including carbon and other greenhouse gasses,
- Increase aesthetic value,
- Reduce ultraviolet radiation,
- Enhance storm water treatment practices, and
- Reduce the urban heat island effect.

SBA TREE PLANTING PROGRAM

Today's economic downturn mirrors the conditions that spurred Congress to enact the previous SBA tree planting program as one of a number of policy tools to spur "rapid increases in employment opportunities in local communities" (P.L. 101-515). Today, the 111th Congress finds itself exploring ways to find jobs for approximately 10 percent of Americans left unemployed during the current economic downturn. ***NASF strongly encourages the House and Senate to support HR 4509 as part of a national strategy towards a full economic recovery.***

State Foresters stand ready to help deliver the SBA program to urban and community areas provided fair and equitable funding is authorized and available for program administration. Most states are facing significant budget shortfalls and will be unable to deliver a new tree planting program unless their costs for administering the program are covered.